DEWAN'S REPLY : Mr. Eapen, it will give me very great pleasure to convey to Her Highness the Maha Rani Regent the message of thanks that you, on behalf of several members of this Assembly, have tendered for the stoppage of the Puram observances at Shertallai. I may say that I have received several telegrams expressing the people's approbation of this reform.

To come back to the business that has engaged you this morning, nobody derives greater pleasure than I do, and I am sure every thinking man here does, from the whole-hearted way in which you have dissociated yourself and those who feel like you from the spirit of communalism which has been brooding over this country like a thing of evil and wickedness, contaminating all our lives, creating unhappiness and sorrow, trouble and misunderstanding. I know that you have had the courage to speak out what many think and many feel but which few have the boldness to stand up and say from the rostrum of this public assembly. It remains for you and such as you to go out and put such sentiments into active practice so that there may be give-and-take between the several communities in the State ; and may it be that from now onwards the whole people of Travancore will not grudge the best man for each post getting it, be his creed what it may and be his caste what it may. When I say the best man, I mean not merely the best in academic qualifications but the best in every way ; for instance, physical strength for a policeman may be the best ; in knowledge of local conditions and people we shall have to see who will make the best *proverthikar* ; in character and in attainments we will have to see who will make the best High Court Judge ; in administrative ability and in capacity to sit down at the desk for long hours, we will have to see who will make the best Secretariat officer.

Nothing, as I said, has given me greater pleasure than to listen to what you gave expression to and I am convinced that there are a great many people not merely in this Assembly, but all over Travancore, who will say that communalism is the one great affliction from which the country is suffering and it behoves us, like gentlemen doctors, to cure this affliction without counting the cost of the medicine or measuring the dose with grudging hand.

185. Public Service.

MR. JOSEPH OMMAN (*Member, Changanachery taluk, Group II*) said that no one would deny that there were several sections of the population which had failed to secure adequate representation in the public service, which, for one reason or another had become almost the monopoly of a few communities. Such inequality not only adversely affected the economic condition and hampered the progress of the unrepresented communities but wounded their self-respect. Most of such communities had made appreciable progress in education, and the exclusion from Government offices, by which they were penalised in the past for their educational backwardness, should cease. Qualified men were available, even for the higher appointments, in all the communities. The present unequal distribution of offices was responsible for the communal bitterness and political unrest in the country. Patronage remained in the hands of officers who belonged to communities who had captured more than their legitimate share of appointments and were also unwilling or unable to divest themselves of clannishness. A firm and determined policy of Government, if vigorously pursued for a decade, would undoubtedly eradicate the existing evil and restore harmony in public life. It would not be enough to distribute future appointments equally to all communities. The existing disparity could be removed only by preferential treatment, for a term of years, to members of the communities inadequately represented in the service. It would be a mistake to allot an equal number of appointments to each of the various communities ; the basis of population ought to be the criterion. In the case of communities which had no candidates for higher appointments, a correspondingly more liberal recruitment should be made to the subordinate ranks, as that would afford an indirect impetus to education among them. When equally qualified persons from several communities applied for an appointment, the candidate whose community was least represented should automatically be selected. In conclusion, the member expressed his gratitude to Her Highness

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the Maharani Regent and the Dewan for the steps taken to safeguard the interests of the unrepresented communities and to give them an increasing share in the administration of the country.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Mr. Joseph Omman, I have been thinking while you have been speaking; and my thoughts wandered off to the various disadvantages of printed orations prepared long beforehand. Unfortunately they are so very inelastic that they do not render themselves adaptable to what preceded. The last speaker had already carried us away to the sublime heights of a beautiful ideal and now you have brought us down from those high fields to the hunting ground of nature. I do not know what weapons you use besides tooth and claw in the matter of communal representation. But apparently a rigid mathematical formula, yielding precision and exactitude in proportion to community and appointment, is one of the best instruments for the destruction of peace and happiness in the country. I do not think, after what I remarked in reference to the last speaker, that you still have any possible misapprehension as to the ideals I place before me. How far I shall be able to approximate towards the attainment of those ideals will depend much on every member of every community in the State. That is a responsibility you, like others, share with me.

186. Gowda Saraswata Brahmins and the Public Service.

MR. J. VENU VADHYAR (*Member, Trading Classes, Quilon*) observed that the cordial co-operation not only of all the various communities but of all the individuals composing the society was essential for the good government of a country. It was therefore regrettable that the Gowda Saraswata Brahmin community, to which the member belonged, had not been adequately represented on the popular bodies instituted to help the administration. In regard to the Legislative Council and the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly, the community had not been given facilities for returning an elected member and the Government had not removed the defect by a sustained policy of nomination. As representatives of the trading classes, Konkan Brahmins often came to the Assembly, but that was no reason to deny direct representation to the community.. The *Parishad* held at Quilon in Minam 1100 had urged that a Gowda Saraswata Brahmin should be nominated to the Legislative Council, but their demand had been a cry in the wilderness. The members of the community were scattered in all the taluks throughout the State, and candidates from the community had lamentably failed to be returned from the general constituencies. Adequate representation of minority communities could be secured either by nomination or grant of suffrage to communal organisations like the *Parishad*. Though numerically small, the community played a very important part in the economic life of the country. The contribution made by his community to the customs revenue, income tax, etc., of the State was not insignificant; there were rich *jenmies* and merchant princes; yeoman help was rendered by the community to the State and the Royal Family in the past and it had been recognised. One member each should be appointed to the Council and the Assembly from the community.

In the matter of representation in the public service, the condition was equally deplorable. Out of a population of more than ten thousand, there were only six officers—a High Court Judge due to retire soon, a medical officer, a teacher, and one each in the Excise, Police and Anchal Departments. He pleaded for the community being treated with the same sympathy by the Government as the other unrepresented communities to which special encouragement was being vouchsafed. There was a feeling in the community that it was being neglected. With the retirement of the High Court Judge referred to, there would be no Gowda Saraswata Brahmin in the Judicial Department, a defect which the Government could easily remove. Qualified applicants from the community should be given preferential treatment. He prayed in conclusion that the Government should also take suitable measures to remove the present political, official and other disabilities under which the community was labouring.

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